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**BOARD OF CORRECTIONS MEETING — AUGUST 2017**

**Meeting.** The Board of Corrections met August 4, 2017, at the Clarinda Correctional Facility (CCF) and was welcomed by Warden Randy Gibbs. Warden Gibbs stated that even though the Mental Health Institute (MHI) has closed, they still consider the CCF to be part of a treatment complex. He noted that the Zion Recovery Services treatment center and the Clarinda Academy still on the grounds, and the CCF offers education through Iowa Western Community College and employment with H&H Trailers. The closing of the Clarinda Lodge after FY 2017 deappropriations was very challenging, as around 200 offenders needed to be moved back into the CCF. The CCF has been pushed to find new ways of doing business and change how they operate.

A short presentation was given regarding the dog training program started in May 2016 at the CCF. The inmates assist with basic training of the dogs. Originally the CCF had partnered with the Animal Rescue League in Des Moines, but it is now adding dogs from local animal shelters in Clarinda, Shenandoah, and Red Oak. It was stated that the dog program has changed the atmosphere in the housing units, and it is seen as an honor to be picked to work with a dog.

A current offender who has been at the CCF for 22 months stated that the work that is available in the community (the Page County Landfill and the Clarinda Cemetery are two locations using inmate labor) provides a sense of confidence, better work ethic, and preparation for the inmate to reenter society when their sentence is done. He stated that the offenders see it as an honor to work in the community and know that they are helping.

**Director's Report.** Director Jerry Bartruff provided an update of activity and items of interest since the last meeting, including the following:

- Director Bartruff met with Department of Transportation Director Mark Lowe regarding the possibility of signage being done at the Anamosa State Penitentiary Iowa Prison Industries (IPI), and with the Office of the Chief Information Officer about using IPI for print shop operations.
- Members of the American Probation and Parole Association will be doing time studies in Iowa to identify efficiencies and set capacity numbers. That information will be used to form budget requests.
- August 1 marked the 20th anniversary of the Newton Correctional Facility (NCF). An event to celebrate was held that day at the NCF.
- Director Bartruff has been requested to be a part of a workgroup headed by the Department of Human Services (DHS) on mental health, disability, and substance use disorder services. This workgroup was established in [SF 504](#), and their report is to be submitted to the Governor and General Assembly by December 15, 2017.
- A 50-state summit on public safety that Director Bartruff has been asked to attend will be held in Washington, D.C. Department of Corrections (DOC) Health Care Administrator Dr. Jerome Greenfield, Representative Zach Nunn, and Des Moines Police Chief Dana Wingert will also be attending.
- Two upcoming retirements of DOC personnel who represent many years of dedication and experience include Lettie Prell, Research Director, and Diann Wilder, Inspector General. Prell will retire September 22, and Wilder will be retiring at the end of the year.

**H&H Trailers.** Tyler Gray, Plant Manager of H&H Trailers, gave a presentation on the apprenticeship program that was started at the CCF a couple of years ago. The goals are to show the inmates what it takes to work as a team, show them how to give and receive respect, and allow them to save some money to repay restitution and fines and have a little bit of savings when they are released from the facility. The inmates have stated that the ability to fabricate and weld are good skills to have when they are released. H&H often offers employment opportunities, either in Clarinda or at their Indiana parent location, to offenders upon release.

**Budget.** Department of Corrections Financial Manager Steve Dick gave a budget update:

- The accrual period will end August 30, and then FY 2017 will be finalized. There will probably be one final reallocation through the Central Office later in August.
- Capital appropriations for the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women and the Iowa State Penitentiary are final and those budget units are closed.
- FY 2018 budgeting is really tight and limiting, although there are efforts to maintain the status quo with staffing. Retirements are challenging, as is uncertainty with Iowa Code chapter [20](#) changes, including what health insurance offerings for CY 2018 will be.
- There are currently 39 fewer staff positions in DOC institutions and seven fewer staff in Community Based Corrections facilities. In particular, there are challenges hiring nursing and correctional officer positions. The DOC may consider hiring nurse practitioners and licensed practical nurses rather than registered nurses.
- Department-wide average overtime expenses have been reduced from \$170,000 per pay period to \$100,000 per pay period. Those savings had been projected and built into the FY 2018 budget. Additional savings may be realized in lower costs for licensing Microsoft services.
- The DHS has turned over the MHI grounds to the DOC. While that means additional maintenance costs, it also provides some opportunities for using the grounds.
- The overall goal for the FY 2018 budget is to maintain existing staff; however, the DOC cannot continue to absorb the costs of increasing salaries and health care.
- Two current major maintenance projects at the CCF include a \$250,000 to \$300,000 roofing project and a \$300,000 project to replace a boiler in the MHI facility.

**Public Comments.** Several retired and current CCF employees offered comments on the success of existing CCF programs, concern for staffing levels, and budget issues. A common theme in the comments was an understanding that budgets were tight, but staffing and morale levels needed to be increased so that staff would feel safe and appreciated. It was stated that inmates were also nervous about staffing levels as they felt unsafe.

**Board Discussion.** Board member Dr. John Chalstrom stated that the DOC is dependent upon the State appropriation and cannot be internally divided. Advocacy needs to be done with legislators for adequate funding and staffing. He also applauded the DOC Central Office for the streamlining they have done. He recognized that the budget concerns affect morale, but that relationships within the organization cannot be affected. Board member Larry Krudej encouraged those with concerns to speak with their elected legislators.

**Next Meeting.** The next Board meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on September 8, 2017, at the Iowa Medical and Classification Center in Coralville. For additional information, see the DOC website: <https://doc.iowa.gov/about-us/board-corrections>.

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